

# **EPA Brownfields Supplemental Assistance**

## ***Ypsilanti, MI***

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### **BACKGROUND**

EPA awarded the City of Ypsilanti supplemental assistance for its Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot. Ypsilanti is a historic urban community with a population of nearly 25,000, located 20 minutes west of the Detroit Metropolitan Airport. The city is constrained by various economic factors, which have created a need for brownfields redevelopment. For example, the city is only four square miles, more than 30 percent of the land is tax exempt, and the city has an 18 percent poverty rate which is three times the county rate. Based on demographic characteristics such as these, Ypsilanti has been designated as a disadvantaged community by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority.

It is estimated that between 30 and 35 brownfields exist in the city, most of which are located in eight redevelopment target areas established under the city's master planning process. These areas were selected based on existing and historic land use patterns, the extent of underused properties and structures, limited economic viability, and the presence of real or perceived environmental contamination. Potential areas of expansion for the supplemental

### **PILOT SNAPSHOT**



*Ypsilanti, Michigan*

**Date of Announcement:**  
March 2000

**Amount:** \$150,000

**Profile:** The Pilot will inventory, target, and assess brownfields throughout the city with a focus on properties within Ypsilanti's eight redevelopment target areas.

#### **Contacts:**

Community and Economic  
Development Department  
City of Ypsilanti  
(734) 483-9646

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 5  
(312) 886-1960

Visit the EPA Region 5 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

assistance include the Water Street Redevelopment area, a former city landfill, a former dry cleaning operation, and additional sites throughout the city.

## **OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

Ypsilanti's objective is to spur community-wide economic investment and revitalization. Brownfields redevelopment in the city's targeted areas will provide the city with the opportunity to revitalize a community facing the struggles of urban disinvestment and an inability to expand its boundaries. The supplemental assistance will help the city identify and prioritize brownfields throughout the city and provide funds for environmental assessments at several priority properties. These assessments will allow the city to determine what types of cleanup and redevelopment barriers must be removed with the aid of other city and state incentives for brownfields redevelopment.

To accomplish these objectives, the Pilot plans to:

- Identify brownfields within the city, create a Geographic Information System (GIS) inventory, and select five to six high-priority brownfields for further investigation;
- Conduct Phase I environmental assessments at the five to six targeted brownfields;
- Conduct Phase II environmental assessments as needed at the targeted properties and prepare assessment reports to describe the type and extent of cleanup needed and to determine potential reuses for each property;
- Prepare risk assessment plans for each property undergoing a Phase II assessment; and
- Conduct multifaceted community outreach to ensure that the community is involved throughout the identification, inventory, prioritization, and assessment process.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*